



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Pacific Missile Range Facility Change of Command
Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, Hawaii
Admiral Cecil D. Haney
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As Prepared for Delivery**

Thank you Garron for that introduction.

I certainly echo the praise and recognition from Captain David “Roy” Rogers and Mayor Carvalho for the fantastic job Mongo has done here at the Pacific Missile Range Facility and throughout his career.

Wow! Not everyone gets the mayor from the community to speak at your change of command, much less sing the Hawaii state song. Thanks Mayor Carvalho, and thank you Roy for your remarks.

Community leaders, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, friends and especially the Mongillo and Hay families, good morning and aloha!

It’s my honor and privilege to be here today to participate in this ceremony, to present Captain Nicholas Mongillo, callsign Mongo, his award and to return to this superior facility on the Garden Island.

PMRF is extremely important to me at Pacific Fleet; but even more relevant, it is important to the National security of our country. As the world's largest instrumented, multi-dimensional testing and training missile range, it is the only range that can precisely track objects from the undersea domain to outer space simultaneously. It is great to see we keep working to make it better and better. That is why I consider it the crown jewel of our operational ranges, given its unique capabilities.

Given its historic importance, I know this range will continue to be critical as we execute the President of the United States’ rebalance strategy. No wonder we keep sending our most outstanding leaders such as Mongo and Bruce here.

With the help of his tremendous team, Mongo has brilliantly led this world class facility that helps train and prepare our forces to deploy forward and to execute the full range of military operations.

This includes a wide variety of range events, from intricate missile defense tests, to preparing independent surface ship deployers during Koa Kai exercises, and undersea training, such as

the submarine commander's course for our submarines, or preparing our carrier strike group forces for global deployment.

As a submarine captain, I'd like to think just a few short years ago, I learned to appreciate the opportunity this facility offered in training my crew and only wish I had kept count through my submarine commanding officer and commodore tours, of just how many times I operated on the undersea portion of this range. Today, as the Commander of the Pacific Fleet, I see the big picture, not just through a periscope. I fully appreciate the tremendous capabilities this facility offers to test and train our joint military forces in multiple domains. I am awed by the unique ability to facilitate research and development as well as experimentation, to include the Aegis Ashore test facility under construction. All critical to our warfighting readiness!

By providing the 1,100 square miles of ranges that supported both RIMPAC 2010 and 2012, Mongo's leadership helped advance our relationships with participating nations, while building warfighting capability and improving interoperability between forces.

Many of those participating had the rare opportunity to fire live ordnance at floating targets during three separate Sink Exercises. The foreign navies involved in those SINKEX's are still talking about it today.

Mongo values the surrounding community. He and his team have understood the importance of environmental stewardship and have even received awards for their hard work. I know that their conscientious efforts in taking care of the land and the sea around these islands have earned the respect, trust and confidence of all.

Part of that is because he has placed such a high value on the importance of the Navy's relationship with the people in the community, not to mention he's just a nice guy. I think the size of the crowd today is a testament to that.

Mongo has always had a reputation for taking care of his people. I know he has worked hard here at PMRF taking care of the entire team involved in running this facility. Some of his proudest achievements have focused on the completion of quality of life projects he envisioned for you. I hear he even got Toby Keith to come out and sing in May.

Mongo, you have done great work here over the last three years. You leave behind a tremendous legacy in the people you have led, the relationships you have established and the goals you have set and achieved. I congratulate you on such a successful tour here at PMRF; you have really made a difference! As a combat-proven warfighter, I also want to commend you for more than 27 years of dedicated service to our Navy and our grateful Nation.

Whether catapulting off or landing on aircraft carriers, in the air in a combat zone, on major staffs like Northern Command, or here leading PMRF, you have left your mark on all those Sailors and civilians you have touched.

Well done!

Will you please join me for an awards presentation?

[Award Presentation]

Jackie, this is a big day for you too. I've been told that you are hoping to be adopted here on the island so that you don't have to leave Kauai. I know that Jackie has certainly embraced this wonderful island and in turn, I think the island has truly embraced her.

She is a remarkable lady, filled with aloha, and I know she has been an incredible partner to Mongo as they worked together for the betterment of the base, the people and the community here.

Jackie, thank you for your efforts in supporting your husband here, your service to the United States Navy, to our Sailors and their families.

Thank you for your support throughout his career.

Will you join me up front here?

[Present Awards]

I know Nick and Jackie are proud of their many accomplishments together, but perhaps none gives greater pride than their family. Lauren, Kellie, I'm so glad each of you are here to share this special day with your parents.

I understand the difficulty involved with those family moves across country, especially during your high school years, not to mention missing your dad when he would deploy. I know it was difficult at times and I sincerely appreciate your sacrifice as well. Thank you for lending your dad to our Navy for so long.

Will you please join me here at the podium?

[Present Awards]

Nick, Jackie congrats on a highly successful tour and career. You'll be missed by people here and throughout the Navy. I wish you the very best of luck in your future. Fair winds and following seas.

Mahalo and aloha

(Applause)

Next, I want to welcome the new leadership to the Pacific Fleet Ohana. Bruce and Susie have just left the fast-paced life inside the Pentagon where Bruce worked in the Air Warfare Directorate. There he worked on Future Aircraft Carrier Requirements for our Navy.

Bruce, I know the pace in the Pentagon was intense with budget uncertainty and scrutiny over major programs. While I would like to say this tour will be easier, I won't, given the significant leadership responsibilities here. I will say what is different is this community has aloha. Something generally missing inside the beltway.

So, I'm thankful you reached escape velocity from D.C. and have landed here. Today the mantle of responsibility of this tremendous command falls on you. You have a great opportunity to spring board off of the many successes that Mongo and his team have achieved. I want you to know that you have my utmost confidence that you are the right man for this important job. I know that with your wife Susie, you both will do great things while you are here and will enjoy the wonderful community and surrounding of the Garden Island. I'm truly pleased to see you both here. Welcome aboard.

As I conclude, I want to thank all of those here that support the National defense of our Nation and especially this Garden Island community.

May God bless our Navy, our Nation, this wonderful Ohana and all of those volunteers who serve.

Mahalo Nui Loa and thank you.